

House Local Government Committee Rules of Procedure - 2007

I. Public Hearings on Proposed Legislation

A. Hearing Process

1. At the time set for hearing, the Chair will recognize the sponsor of the bill who will open the presentation.
2. Proponents of the bill will present testimony.
3. Opponents of the bill will present testimony.
4. Questions will then be asked by committee members only.
All questions will be directed through the Chair.
5. All discussion will begin and end at the discretion of the Chair.
6. The sponsor of the bill will close the presentation.

B. Witnesses

1. All witnesses shall sign the witness sheet before presenting testimony.
2. Proponents and opponents should try to state new points of testimony only. If they wish to agree with points already made, they should simply say that they agree.
3. Witnesses presenting testimony before the committee should remain in the room until the hearing is closed to answer any questions from committee members.
4. Written copies of the testimony may also be submitted for the permanent committee record.

C. General

1. Everyone will act and be treated in a courteous manner.
2. The committee chair shall maintain order within the committee room and the environs during all committee meetings.
3. Suggested amendments to bills should be presented to the committee in writing.
4. Cell phones and PDA's must be turned off in the hearing room except in cases of urgency.
5. Video taping of hearings by members of the public will be allowed at the discretion of the Chair.
6. Testimony requiring the use of video, audio, or other equipment will be permitted at the discretion of the Chair, if arrangements are made in advance.
7. Absentee video or audio testimony may not be permitted.

II. Executive Session

- A. Generally, executive session will not be held the same day as the public hearing on the bill.
- B. Although executive sessions are open to the public, no comments may be made by anyone but committee members. Members of the public may be asked questions by committee members at the discretion of the Chair.
- C. Absentee voting by committee members is permitted through the use of a standard form or through the vice chair or minority vice chair.
 1. Proxy votes, however, are discouraged and meeting attendance is requested.
- D. Motions by committee members do not require a second.

III. Amendments

- A. Amendments to be presented to the committee for consideration during executive session must be requested by a committee member or the sponsor of the bill.
- B. All amendments must be submitted in writing to the staff researcher by noon of the day prior to executive action on a bill. A simple amendment may be considered on shorter notice at the discretion of the chair. For example, a change in a date or number could be a simple amendment.
- C. Committee members are the only legislators who can move amendments to a bill while the bill is in committee.